

Response to Examiner Questions Final 29 August 2019

Background

Questions from Deborah McCann, the consultant appointed by Dorset Council to examine the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (BANP) were received by Bridport Town Council via Dorset Council on August 9th 2019.

The Examiner questions focus on two lines of enquiry; evidence for the BANP Principle Residency Housing policy and the process undertaken to arrive at the list of sites proposed for Green Space designation.

BANP Steering Group members responsible for developing housing and landscape policies have helped to provide material for this response and provision of additional evidence.

The Joint Councils Committee approved this response to go forward to the Examiner and Dorset Council at their meeting on August 29th 2019.

It is understood that this response, sent to Dorset Council, will be redacted by them to allow the response to go online and be made available to the public.

Question 1

“The Neighbourhood Plan Area includes a number of distinct settlements. The impact of second home ownership between settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan Area appears to differ. Having looked at the evidence regarding the number of second homes within the Bridport Neighbourhood Plan Area there seems to be some discrepancy between the data set out in the Bridport Area parishes imported from "West Dorset" tab of DCC Empty Property Data, 2 Oct 2017 and the data within the NP evidence base. Please provide clarification on the apparent difference between the figures and Is there any additional existing evidence, specific to the Neighbourhood Plan Area to support this policy including impact on house prices?

JCC Response

There are several facets to the question, which are best dealt with in turn:

- a) Discrepancy between DCC Empty Property Data and NP evidence base.
- b) Variation in second home ownership between settlements.
- c) Additional evidence including impact on house prices.

a) Discrepancy between DCC Empty Property Data and NP Evidence Base.

The Local Authority uses Council Tax returns as a basis for estimating the number of empty properties, which at October 2017 gave 431 second homes out of a total of 7821 (5.5%, or 1 in 18 homes). On the face of it this would appear a relatively mild incursion, however the level of public concern expressed during consultations prompted us to look deeper. A newspaper front-page article (Bridport News, 25th October 2018) reporting that a quarter of West Dorset homes are sold as second homes suggested that there may be more second homes than DCC know about. We were able to corroborate the newspaper article using HMRC records of higher rate stamp duty, in fact HMRC provided us the specific figure of 27% in 2017-18 for the DT6 postcode area (which is approximately coincident with the NP area).

On questioning DCC it became apparent that their primary interest is in the income from Council Tax. As “second homes” are liable to the same Council Tax as primary residences, there is no reason for them to waste resources on checking on how a home is being used between changes of ownership. This was confirmed by a response from WDCC (their reference FOI WDDC 6414, 22nd November 2018) which states (our emphases in bold):

*“We establish the correct liability for Council Tax by requesting relevant information **from new owners or occupiers**. Information is collected from the*

customer through various channels, i.e. liability enquiry forms, online change of address form, correspondence from the customer, etc.

*Regulations require that billing authorities take reasonable steps to ascertain entitlement to discounts. **We do not carry out reviews in relation to Second Homes Classes A and B**, as no discount is applicable to these classes of dwelling.”*

The Council officer suggested that an alternative source of information for our purposes was ONS census data, since this is related to the occupancy of a property. On census returns, such homes are recorded as “No usual residents”, for which the official definition is:

*“A household space with **no usual residents** may still be used by short-term residents, visitors who were present on census night, or a combination of short-term residents and visitors. Vacant household spaces, and household spaces that are used as second addresses, are also classified in census results as ‘household spaces with no usual residents’”.*

This is a good proxy for a definition of a “holiday or second home” – in other words, not a principal residence.

The ONS figures are updated only every ten years with the most recent census having been in 2011, however even that shows roughly double the second home population known to DCC, at 10.6% across the NP Area. Moreover by comparing the 2011 census data with the equivalent from the two previous censuses, 2001 and 1991, an extrapolation can be carried out to give an indication of the likely trajectory of this figure, which (using even the most benign linear model for an increase) suggests that by 2021 the figure is likely to be at least 15%, as shown in the HNA. This we believe is sufficiently intrusive to be detrimental to the stability and sustainability of the area.

If instead of a linear extrapolation a “best fit” curve is used to predict future trend of second home ownership (reflecting the HMRC information on second home transactions) the result is far higher – a predicted 22% by 2021. We have not included the “best fit” prediction in our HNA since we believe that it could not be defended if challenged, however it is a possible scenario.

The two projections – linear, and best fit - are shown in the graphics below. The ONS data is in an Excel spreadsheet “Second homes Bridport Area 1991-2011” in the NP evidence base.

b) Variation in Second Home Ownership between Settlements.

While all five parishes within the NP area have significant numbers of houses “with no usual residents” by the Census definition, the proportion as measured in 2011 varied from 8.6% to 16.4% (probably 11% to 19% today, assuming a linear growth in the number of such properties since 2001). The lowest density is Allington parish and the highest is Symondsbury parish, which contains both the village and also much of the coastal settlement West Bay, both popular with visitors.

It could be argued that the need for a policy to curtail the growth of second homes is less justifiable in the parishes with lower proportions, however the Neighbourhood Plan development team have taken the view that placing a restriction in any particular area (whether defined by parish, postcode or any other means) will simply displace the problem across its border to a neighbouring one, because no part of the NP area is far from any other. It was also felt that as a communally developed plan, it would be divisive to apply policies unevenly across the plan area.

For these reasons draft Policy H9 is applied without exception to the NP Area as a whole. The second home proportions for each of the five parishes, with projections to 2021, are shown in **Figure 1 & 2**.

c) Additional Evidence including Impact on House Prices.

No numerical evidence is presented upon the impact on house prices, because we believe that it would be too speculative (a “what if” scenario). However it is, we believe, self-evident that if the growth in properties being used as second homes is restricted, more of them will be available as main residences to the local home-buying market. As market prices are driven by availability, the effect will be to put a brake on increases in the cost of a new home.

Between 2001 and 2011, the ONS census reports show that the average annual growth of second homes was 49.5 properties per year. If that growth were only to be halved by a Principal Residence policy (allowing that existing homes could well be bought as second homes) it would still result in 25 fewer homes becoming removed from the principal residence stock. Against a background build rate of only 38 completions per annum over the last 10 recorded years (**HNA Appendix 3.5.1**) this would be a really significant gain for local residents, which is the thrust of the policy.

Much of the pressure to develop a Principal Residence policy had come from residents. To determine what level of support or opposition might exist within the local business community, having developed the policy in outline the NP team

undertook a survey via the Bridport Business Chamber (formerly the Chamber of Commerce). The results showed no firm bias one way or the other. ***The survey is summarised in HNA Appendix 2.7.***

There is widespread anecdotal evidence, but not used in the HNA or in the development of the policy, that there are already social impacts of too-numerous holiday homes in that houses and flats remain empty for long periods to the detriment of community life and the local economy. Such feelings, while genuinely held and probably accurate, were beyond the resources of our neighbourhood plan to quantify and use as proof of an existing second home “blight”. The development of the policy has concentrated instead upon the consequence of too many new homes being unavailable to would-be permanent residents due to their being put into only occasional use.

Graphical presentations of ONS Census data for households “with no usual residents”, 1991 to 2011

Figure 1 - shows the “cautious” projection used in the Housing Needs Assessment:

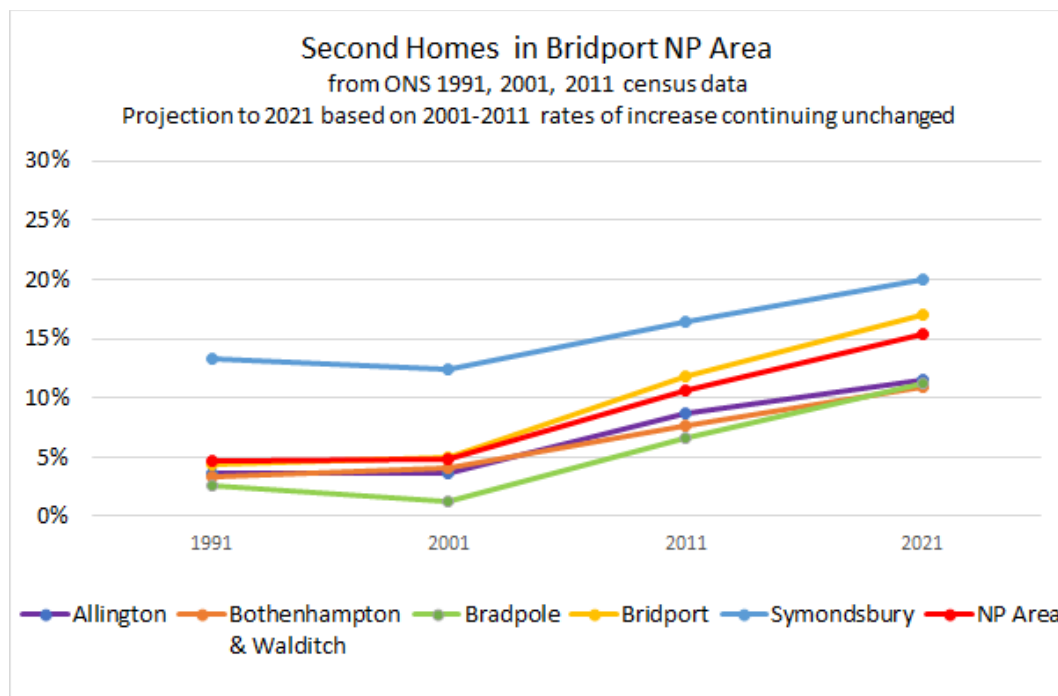
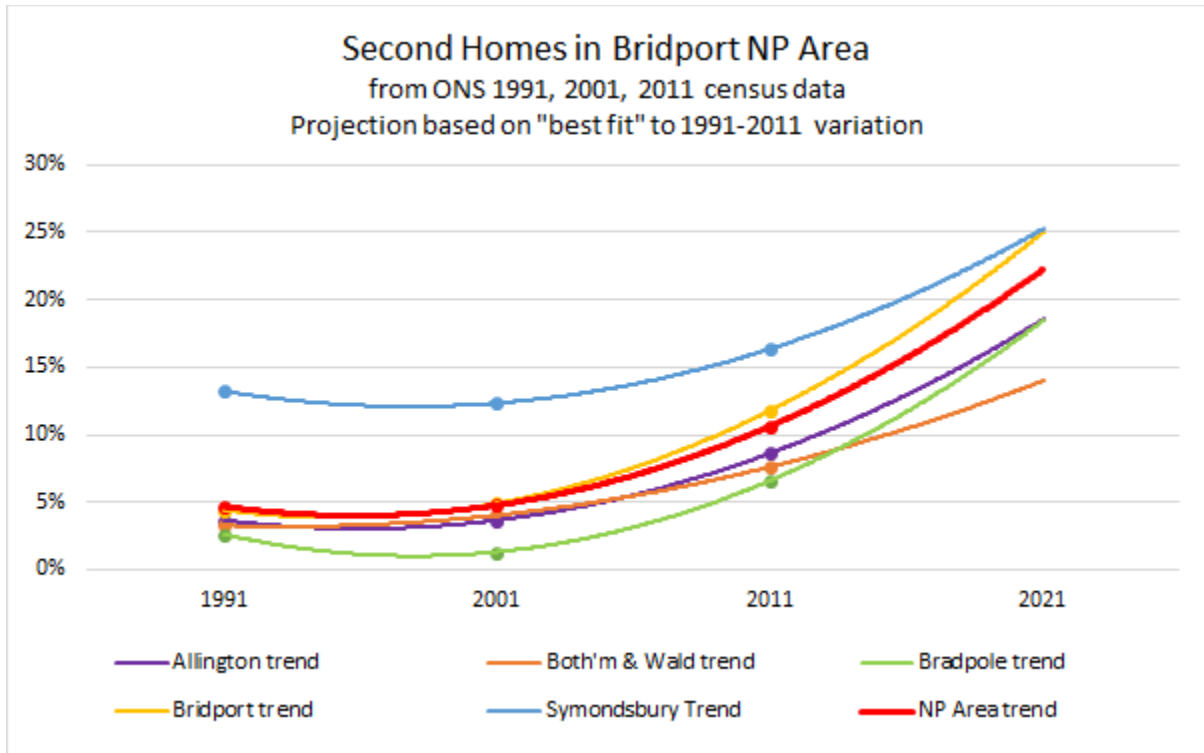


Figure 2 - is the “best fit” projection based upon the historic rate of growth in second homes in each of the five parishes. It may be more realistic but can not be proved without a full door-to-door survey of the whole area, so it has not been used:



Question 2 - POLICY L3 Local green spaces

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan proposes the designation of a number of Local Green Spaces. Whilst I have been provided with information regarding how the areas meet the NPPF tests I cannot locate the information confirming that the owners of the proposed Local Green Spaces have been consulted or a copy of their responses. This in particular relates to the following sites:

**** Watton Hill Bradpole- Symondsburys Estate***

**** Area known as Happy Island Bradpole / Bridport-The Co-op, Travis Perkins, Mr Ted Seal, Spray Copse Farm***

**** Cooper's Wood and Field, Allington -Woodland Trust***

**** Allington Hill Allington-Woodland Trust***

Please can I be provided with this information.

JCC Response

The research of Green Spaces across the neighbourhood plan area was undertaken by a Working Group of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The community volunteers undertook and came forward with proposals for areas to be designated as green spaces and green gaps. Research was undertaken between 2016 and 2017 using best practice guidance. A Green Spaces Overview report v3 2017 was produced setting out the process undertaken for assessing and designating green spaces in the BANP (***see Appendix 1***).

All landowners and Parish Councils were sent letters in the Spring of 2017 informing them of the proposal to include sites as designated green spaces in the BANP (***see Appendix 2 for copies of letters and responses received at the time; specifically from the Seals, landowners at Happy Island and the Woodland Trust***).

The Consultation Report on the 2017 "Issues consultation" includes summaries of responses regarding the proposal to protect green spaces. This document highlights the importance to the community of 'protecting' green spaces, in particular the area known as Happy Island. No objections were raised by any landowners to green space protection at this stage. (***see Appendix 3 – Extract from 2017 Consultation Report – Green Spaces***).

At the launch of the Regulation 14 consultation letters were sent to statutory consultees and selected landowners informing them of the Regulation 14 consultation process, where to access the document and how to respond. (***see Appendix 4 – Letter and landowner listing***)

The Regulation 14 Consultation Report demonstrates strong community support for protection of the distinctive skyline around Bridport, and specifically in support of Policy LH4 – Green Space designation. 92 respondents supported the LH4 policy, 4 Don't knows and 5 objected to the policy (***see Appendix 5 - Excel spreadsheet showing all comments received on Heritage and Landscape issues with LH4 comments highlighted in red text***)

Through the online questionnaire written responses to the Regulation 14 consultation were received on behalf of the Watton Hill Trust and Symondsburry Farm. (***see Appendix 6***). This representation requests deletion of Watton Hill from the Green spaces designation and proposes an amendment to the Green Gaps anti-coalescence area to the west of the Hill.

A written response was received from Ross Jessopp regarding the green space designation boundary for Happy Island (***see Appendix 7***). As a result this response the boundary for the Happy Island Green Space area was amended in the Regulation 15 submission version.

Finally the BANP JCC would like to make the Examiner aware that Phillip Colfox of the Symondsburry Estate is currently Chair of Symondsburry Parish Council and has been an active parish councillor throughout the development process of the BANP. As one of the participating Parishes Symondsburry has been fully informed about the BANP, including all policy proposals prior to public consultation. Phillip Colfox was the Symondsburry Parish Council representative on the BANP Steering Group for a period in 2018.

It is our understanding that Watton Hill Trust, Symondsburry Farms and Symondsburry Estates operate functionally as one organisation.

Appendix 1 – Green Space Overview Report v.3 2017

Produced by Heritage and Environment Working Group – attached as a pdf

Appendix 2 – Letters to landowners and Parishes with interests in areas to be proposed as designated green spaces Spring 2017 including responses received from MrSeal and Woodland Trust



Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan
c/o Bridport Town Council,
Mountfield
Bridport DT6 3JP

28 June 2017

Dear Mrs Stephenson,

As a member of the Heritage and Environment Working Group within the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan, I was tasked with assessing areas in and around Bridport which might be suitable for Local Green Space designation. This designation adds a layer of protection to areas of the town which are valued by its people for their beauty, recreational use, wildlife, or some combination of these.

The following areas within Allington parish have been identified as suitable for designation:

1. Allington Hill
2. Cooper's Wood and Field

I am contacting Allington Parish Council as lessees of Cooper's Wood and Field and will also be contacting the Woodland Trust as owners of both areas.

If you have any queries or comments please contact either myself or Richard Nicholls, who is the leader of our working group,

Yours sincerely

Sal Robinson



VISION 2030

Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan
c/o Bridport Town Council,
Mountfield
Bridport DT6 3JP

28 June 2017

Dear Ms Goldsmith,

As a member of the Heritage and Environment Working Group within the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan, I was tasked with assessing areas in and around Bridport which might be suitable for Local Green Space designation. This designation adds a layer of protection to areas of the town which are valued by its people for their beauty, recreational use, wildlife, or some combination of these.

The following areas within Bradpole parish have been identified as suitable for designation:

1. Pageants Field
2. Railway Gardens and old Railway Crossing
3. The Gore
4. Watton Hill
5. Area known as Happy Island (partly in Bridport parish).

I believe that Bradpole Parish Council owns Pageants Field and The Gore and maintains the Railway Gardens and old Railway Crossing - I would be grateful if you would let me know who owns this area.

The owners of Watton Hill and Happy Island have been contacted by another member of the Working Group.

If you have any queries or comments please contact either myself or Richard Nicholls, who is the leader of our working group,

Yours sincerely

Sal Robinson

Correspondence with Mr Seal – Happy Island

Neighbourhood Plan c/o Bridport Town Council, Mountfield, Bridport DT6 3JP

11th May 2017

Dear Mr Seal,

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (<http://www.vision-2030.co.uk>) is a chance for the residents of the town and surrounding parishes to help shape the ways in which their community will develop between now and 2030. The Plan will be used to help determine planning decisions.

The different working groups (economy, housing, transport, etc.) have, for more than a year, been putting together policies which will together form the Neighbourhood Plan. Those proposed policies will be put before the town early this summer and two periods of consultation, informal then formal, with all interested parties, will follow. The final document will then be put to a local referendum. If it receives 50% of the vote, it then comes into force.

As a member of the Heritage and Environment Working Group, I was tasked with assessing those areas in and around Bridport which might be suitable for Local Green Space designation. This designation adds a layer of protection to areas of the town which are valued by its people for their beauty, recreational use, wildlife, or some combination of these.

The area known as 'Happy Island' is, as you will know as well as anyone, extremely popular with the people of this town. It has, accordingly, been put forward by the Heritage and Environment Working Group for Local Green Space designation.

You will have every opportunity, during the consultation period, to make a case for or against. This letter is merely intended to make you aware of the on-going process and of the ways in which you will be able to participate. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact either myself or Richard Nicholls, who is the head of our working group,

Yours faithfully,
Horatio Morpurgo

Horatio Morpurgo
Neighbourhood Plan
C/O Bridport Town Council
Mountfield
Bridport
DT6 3JP

Dear Mr Morpurgo

5th July 2017

Thank you for your letter of 27th June 2017.

It would greatly assist if you could send a plan showing the area which you want to requisition. We will then be able to consider what you say by reference to this.

Yours sincerely

John Llewelyn
Operations – Solicitor

[Redacted signature block]

26th June 2017 Dear Mr Llewelyn,

Thank you for your letter dated 8th June.

The Environment and Heritage Working Group has carefully considered its contents. As you will discover during the consultation process, with which we hope you will engage, several play areas in the town have been put forward as potential Local Green Spaces, including areas which are due to be upgraded in the future. To that extent, so far as we can see, there is no obvious contradiction between your plan to set up a play area and what we are proposing.

We have also as a group studied the plans which accompanied your successful application to develop Seal's Cove. We were not able to find anything which overlapped or even mentioned the area which we have proposed for Local Green Space designation. It is therefore not clear to us what you are actually intending to do with the site beyond the area for which you have planning permission and whether or not those plans would prejudice its selection by us.

It could very well be that our aims do not contradict one another at all. It would help us to make a judgement on this if you would please send us, as soon as you can, more detailed information about what you intend to do with that part of the Happy Island site which you own,

Yours faithfully,
Horatio Morpurgo

Horatio Morpurgo
Neighbourhood Plan
C/O Bridport Town Council
Mountfield
Bridport
DT6 3JP



Dear Mr Morpurgo

17th July 2017

Thank you for your letter of 13th July.

We attach a copy of our letter dated the 5th July and can assure you that our request for a plan was not intended to cause offence. We always find it helpful to know exactly what land is being considered.

The Seals do want to know exactly what is being proposed as the last dealings with the Council were less than satisfactory. The Seals previously generously agreed to the Council's request for a footpath along the river to be made up on their land. They were told that, in return, the footpath would be fenced on the near side of the path to keep the public off the rest of the land. Unfortunately, this was not done and it would appear the Council's failure to do this is now being relied upon by them with an attempt to claim the rest of that unfenced land for public use.

With the greatest of respect, we understand the point that they will own the land but their ability to use the land in the way they want to will be severely restricted to the extent of depriving them of most of the benefits of the land. You may appreciate that the protection of property is a fundamental human right that protects against state interference with your property. If the council unilaterally decided to make your garden Local Green Space, we imagine their reassurance that you still own it would not sweeten the pill.

The Seals have planning permission for, amongst other things, a nursery in the adjoining building which will benefit the local community in terms of tourism, employment, community facilities etc. The nursery operator they are dealing with has insisted that there be an outside space and an application for an amendment is being submitted imminently by our planning consultant. We would suggest that you wait for this application as there will be real issues in terms of child safety and viability of the whole project.

In the interim, could you confirm a couple of issues as to space and funding.

The application includes the river and the other side of the bank which no one has access to bar the owners. Can you please confirm that this is a mistake or explain the legal rationale for this?

Could you confirm that the proposal has earmarked funding for maintenance and insurance etc. and what the maintenance programme includes.

The area between the building and footpath is rarely used by the public and is frequently overgrown is there a reason why the council is trying to claim such a large area? This will be the area which is required for the revised planning for child safety and so some transparency as to the Council's intentions would be appreciated as no one would welcome a situation where the council's actions put children and jobs at risk.

Please could you let us have any procedural guidelines, legal framework and policy documents explaining your goals and remit.

We would be happy to meet with you on site if it could be of assistance.

Yours

Llewelyn
Operations – Solicitor

Dear Mr Llewelyn,

Thank you for your letter dated 17th July.

We have discussed its contents and can confirm the woods will not form part of any Local Green Space. They will be removed from the map.

We are, as we've said before, volunteers. The Neighbourhood Plan is implemented by West Dorset District Council. Green Space designation does not, we repeat, represent any 'claim' upon Mr Seal's land by Bridport Town Council or anyone else, so the Council has no plans to 'maintain' the site. The Neighbourhood Plan does not 'earmark funding'. It provides planning guidance.

It would be useful for us to see your amended planning application, which presumably includes a map. This would help us to decide what shape the Green Space boundary should take on your part of the Happy Island site. Any informed contributions which you might make to the consultation process would be welcome,

Yours sincerely,
Horatio



Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan
c/o Bridport Town Council,
Mountfield
Bridport DT6 3JP

28 June 2017

Dear Ms Brabner-Evans,

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (<http://www.vision-2030.co.uk>) is a chance for the residents of Bridport and surrounding parishes (Allington, Bothenhampton & Walditch, Bradpole and Symondsbury) to help shape the ways in which their community will develop between now and 2030. Once "made", the Plan will be used to help determine planning decisions.

The different working groups (economy, housing, transport, etc.) have, for more than a year, been putting together policies which will together form the Neighbourhood Plan. Those proposed policies will be put before the plan area residents shortly and two periods of consultation, informal then formal, with all interested parties, will follow. The final document will then be put to a local referendum. If it receives 50% of the vote, it then comes into force.

As a member of the Heritage and Environment Working Group, I was tasked with assessing areas in and around Bridport which might be suitable for Local Green Space designation. This designation adds a layer of protection to areas of the town which are valued by its people for their beauty, recreational use, wildlife, or some combination of these.

The following areas within Allington parish have been identified as suitable for designation:

1. Allington Hill
2. Cooper's Wood and Field

I am contacting the Woodland Trust as the owner of both sites and have also contacted Allington Parish Council as lessees of Cooper's Wood and Field.

If you have any queries or comments please contact either myself or Richard Nicholls, who is the leader of our working group,

Yours sincerely
Sal Robinson

Email response received from Woodland Trust:

Dear Ms Robinson

Thank you for your letter of 28 June 2017 addressed to my colleague Catherine Brabner-Evans and relating to the above.

The Woodland Trust has no objection or other comments on your proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Justin Milward
Land & Property Manager (West)

[Redacted signature block]



[Stand up for trees](#)

Appendix 3 – EXTRACT FROM 2017 Consultation Report Green Space/ Green Gaps responses

Question asked: Do you think the Neighbourhood Plan should Protect the green gaps between settlements and other valued green space from development? (20 comments received)

Areas identified for protection as valued green spaces 12 comments	<p>While I would not object to a small (provided it is for local people or have moved into the area for work reasons) amount of new homes in Walditch, it is essential 'old' Walditch remains a distinct village and the space between the village retained and protected.</p> <p>Avoid building on site between main road and Walditch on left as coming into Bridport</p> <p>The green spaces around Bridport are a key part of living here, especially the field next to Happy Island. Protecting them is very important.</p> <p>Would like to see Asker Meadows enhanced as a visitor friendly nature reserve in keeping with its LNR status.</p> <p>Publicly used green field sites like Happy Island should have permanent protection against development.</p> <p>The iconic green spaces that separate the parishes surrounding Bridport should be preserved, for example the field monarch way traverses leading to pack horse bridge by Happy Island. Strongly agree about keeping gap between e.g. Bridport/Symondsburry.</p> <p>I believe it is imperative that the green field sites are protected particularly the field by Happy Island/Happy Island Way/ The fields around the area are part of what makes this area so beautiful and so to consider developing this would be to spoil the landscape, not just for those who live there now, but for future generations as well.</p> <p>Bridport is at risk of overdevelopment. Save the green spaces especially Happy Island fields.</p> <p>The field next to Happy Island is an important part of Bridport green spaces and I do not think it's appropriate to build houses on it.</p> <p>Bridport has a number of highly valued green areas. The fields beside Jessopp Avenue and Happy Island Way are particularly well-used by the local community and should be preserved. Green fields like these around Bridport are an essential part of the iconic views</p> <p>Protection of Jellyfields and Allington Hill is a must, both are loved by many locals.</p>
Support for the protection of green spaces generally 7 comments	<p>You say 'protect valued green space for development' you should protect all green spaces. Accessible green space is essential for the well-being of everyone who uses the town/lives here. Whilst I am less worried about green gaps between settlements, I do believe we should protect valued green space such as parks.</p> <p>Remove the word 'valued'.</p> <p>Our area is beautiful and protecting it and our green spaces is very important. Once gone, they're lost forever.</p> <p>Yes, but within settlements, the protection offered by Local Plan policy COM5 (Retention of Open Space and Recreation Facilities) and the list of types of open space and facilities (e.g. allotments, community orchards, natural green spaces) detailed at para. 6.3.8 on pages 118-119, must not in any way be undermined or weakened by the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Green gaps should be used for leisure not for car parking</p>
Balance with development needs 1 comment	<p>Developments to protect all views and green spaces - Maybe. Yes - there needs to be a balance between protecting views and development for the future. Hard to achieve, but you can't restrict all</p>

Appendix 4 – Landowner letter and listing used in June 2018

Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Consultation

(Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Planning General Planning Regulations 2012)

On behalf of the qualifying body, I am pleased to present the pre-submission consultation version of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan. This is a formal process we are required to undertake prior to submission of the neighbourhood plan to West Dorset District Council.

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Bridport Town Council and its partner parish councils and it covers issues such as climate change, landscape, housing, access, movement, and design, amongst others. Please refer to the plan for further details.

Details of where and when the neighbourhood plan may be inspected are as follows:

- *Electronic copies can be obtained from: <https://www.vision-2030.co.uk/consultation-2018/>*
- *Print copies can be viewed or obtained on request by email to [REDACTED]*
- *Print copies can be viewed or obtained on request by calling [REDACTED]*

Details of how to make representations:

- *Through an online survey accessed via this link: <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MU0KG/> where questions are asked about each individual policy*
- *Hard copy questionnaire available on request by email to [REDACTED]*
- *By post to David Dixon, Project Manager, Bridport Town Council, Mountfield, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 3JP.*

Closing date for representations:

- *The date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised. Therefore, please submit all representations by 17:00 on Friday 7th September 2018.*

An email copy of this letter was sent to Trevor Warrwick, the neighbourhood planning officer at West Dorset District Council, and a hard copy of the plan has also been submitted to West Dorset District Council, as required by the regulations.

Yours sincerely

D.Y. Dixon

David Dixon

Project Manager on behalf of Bridport Town Council, the qualifying body.

The Owner
Happy Island

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

General Manager
Travis Perkins Trading Co. Ltd.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A.G. Jessopp Ltd.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

General Manager
Bridport Co-op

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr Philip Seal
PJ Seal Developments

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

St. Mary's Churchyard

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Miss Sandra Brown
Bridport Millennium Green Trust

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Appendix 5 – Regulation 14 Consultation Responses – Heritage and Landscape

Attached as an Excel spreadsheet – LH4 policy comments highlighted in red text

Appendix 6 – Regulation 14 Consultation responses received to regarding Green Space policy

a) Watton Hill Trust & Symondsburys Farms

I act for the Watton Hill Trust and Symondsburys Farms who have extensive land holdings in the Bridport area. A number of policies and proposals in the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan affect my clients land and they wish to make representations in respect of these matters in the plan. In particular this relates to the policies and proposals relating to the Watton Hill area of the plan.

1. The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges on page 7 that it needs to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. The current Local Plan, is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan as the 'West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015' adopted by the West Dorset District Council on the 22/10/2015. The District Council has determined that this Plan requires review, and is currently consulting on a preferred options version of a revised Local Plan. This is intended to be adopted during 2019. It is likely therefore that on the current timetable, contrary to the intention for it to 'sit alongside the local plan', it will in fact be out of date from around the time it is adopted, and in a number of respects not in conformity with the revised local plan. The plan should therefore be postponed and reviewed when the revised local plan has been adopted so it can ensure that it is in general conformity with an up to date Local plan.

2. A site was put forward to the District Council for inclusion in the local plan for the development of the land around Watton Hill for residential purposes constructed to meet the highest sustainability standards and to meet the substantial need for affordable housing now in Bridport. The inclusion of the site was rejected at the consultation stage by the District Council on highway and landscape grounds. The highways issue has since been overcome, and the landscape concerns are capable of being overcome. The urgent need for social housing remains. My client will therefore be making representations to the recently published Preferred Options Consultation of the Joint Local Plan Review for West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland. In this respect therefore the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan are premature, in particular in relation to the area around Watton Hill. The points set out below detail where the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan will potentially fail to conform with the provisions of the Joint Local Plan Review and could prejudice the provision of much needed affordable housing. As a result the Neighbourhood plan is considered to be premature to the Joint Local Plan Review and should be put on hold until those matters are resolved.

Page 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that it has 'sought to extend the amount of common ground between residents, business groups and other stakeholders'. There are proposals in the Watton Hill area which directly affect my clients landholdings, in particular the designation of land for a local green space under policy LH4. My client is concerned that at no stage have they been consulted regarding these provisions which could have a serious impact on the viability of their landholdings. There is no mechanism in the plan for its implementation and the achievement of public access, although the proposals for the wider area submitted to the Local plan review could provide a mechanism for its implementation. As matters stand however the proposal cannot be supported and it should therefore be removed from the Neighbourhood Plan.

The plan contains a set of objectives on pages 12 & 13 one of which is to enhance and protect the AONB. However it also has an objective to maximise the provision of housing that is genuinely affordable for those in need. These objectives are also reflected in the vision for Bradpole on page 11 of the plan. The imposition of restrictive policies over and above the already stringent restrictions imposed by the AONB designation risk fettering any opportunities to secure the significant benefits that would result from the provision of adequate affordable housing for those in need. There are issues which will be debated in the context of the draft Joint Local Plan Review. It is therefore premature to designate additional restrictions until those issues are resolved and a robust Neighbourhood Plan can be delivered that is clearly in conformity with the Local Plan.

Policy LH3 on page 49 identifies a series of Green Gaps which are described as being to "avoid coalescence between the settlements of Pymore, Allington, Bradpole....."

A map on page 51 shows the areas to be designated as Green Gaps. Area B is described as being the Bradpole & Pymore Green Gap. Pymore is not a settlement but the redevelopment of a former brown field industrial site for residential purposes. It contains no services and looks to Bradpole for the provision of shops schools etc The area is, of course, already covered by policies which protect the area from unjustified development (e.g. AONB, flood restrictions). Area B as drawn would restrict the development area proposed as part of the consultation into the Joint Local Plan Review, a matter which is still to be resolved as the District Council's original objections are considered to be capable of being overcome. If that is the case then the substantial benefits of this development in the form of Affordable housing, open space provision would be potential lost. I attach a plan showing what would represent a more appropriate area to prevent the coalescence of Pymore, Allington and Bradpole without prejudicing the potential future development, with its attendant benefits, of the land to the north and west of Watton Hill. The use of Pymore Road as the eastern boundary represents a logical and easily defended boundary to the Green Gap.

Policy LH4 seeks to designate areas described as local green spaces which it will protect from built development except in very special circumstances. Local Green Space S (Watton Hill) is a site in private ownership and is not therefore currently available to the public as a local green space. It forms part of an agricultural holding. As matters stand it has no reasonable prospect of it being brought into use for the benefit of the public. Its protection from unacceptable development

is already safeguarded by the policies protecting the AONB. The designation of this area as a local green space should be deleted.

H1b - Object to the requirement for viability assessments to be made public

H1d- Starter homes should be included as affordable housing

H2 - H2c is at odds with the requirement in H2a if the objective is to make developments tenure blind.

H3 - there needs to be a viability test attached to this policy as circumstances may dictate that affordable housing cannot be provided.

H4 - a)add 'over 10 units', c) 'guided' not 'based' line 3

H7 - 2. this is an impossible requirement and should be deleted. The Tenure can be controlled by planning conditions and legal agreements

02 -Design review panel should include stakeholders such as landowners in appropriate case

15- the words 'in perpetuity' should be replaced by 'for the foreseeable future'

16 - this matter is covered by other legislation and is not a planning matter.

33 - as per the comment regarding 15

34 - as per the comment regarding 16

Revised Green Gaps proposal received from Watton Hill Trust attached as a pdf.

b) A.G.Jessopp Limited

A.G.Jessopp Limited

[REDACTED]

• [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

David Dixon
Project Manager
Bridport Town Council
Mountfield
Bridport
Dorset
DT6 3JP
Your Ref:
Our Ref: RMJ (poole)
6th September 2018

Dear David
Bridport Area Local Plan, Pre Submission Consultation.

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me at the consultation event in Bridport yesterday afternoon. As I explained to you whilst we welcome the approach of the neighbourhood plan in recognising the importance of good design and housing provision in Bridport, we object to policy LH4 on local green spaces as it currently stands. Our concern is with regards to the site marked on the plan as H and referred to as Happy Island Way. As I explained we are the owners of a part of this site which is allocated in the West Dorset local plan under policy BRID 3 (land to the east of Bredy Vets Centre) to make provision for housing.

We are currently undertaking ecological studies on the site prior to submitting an application to ensure that development takes place in such a way as to encourage bio diversity and, where appropriate, provide habitat improvements. The proposal also includes a large amount of green open space along the river corridor.

As I explained the approach that our development will take is not incompatible with the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan as it will provide a large amount of open space and a green corridor alongside the river. The land to be used for housing is not currently accessible to the public. However designating the land twice, once as housing in the Local Development Plan, and once as part of a green space in the Neighbourhood Plan, can only create confusion and ambiguity. From our conversation yesterday I am given to understand that this area had been included by mistake- as you were not aware that the proposed green area covered the housing allocation in the development plan. Given the fact the area is already allocated as housing under policy BRID 3 it would make the most sense for the area covered by that allocation to be removed from the Neighbourhood Plans Green Space H. This would bring the Neighbourhood Plan into accordance with the Development Plan, and still fulfil the Town Councils aim of a green corridor in this location.

Yours Sincerely
Ross Jessopp BA (hons) MPLAN
For and On behalf of A.G Jessopp Ltd